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LEAKS
WASHINGTON

President Reagan can do nothing about fighting international terrorism until he plugs internal leaks at the CIA on secret plans for countermeasures, a research center member said today.

Arnold Beichman, visiting scholar at the Hoover Institution, a research center, said the sealing of top secret leaks should have No. 1 priority. His views were given in an article in The Washington Times.

"Until President Reagan can be sure that whatever counterterrorist strategy he and his advisers select for future execution will not end up on the front page of The Washington Post," he said, "nothing is going to happen to diminish the terrorist power now deployed so successfully by" Iran, Libya, North Korea and Cuba. Reagan in a July 8 speech on terrorism also mentioned Nicaragua as a prime terrorist threat but Beichman disagreed.

Beichman said he was not "Washington Post bashing" on intelligence leaks although most of his references were to that newspaper.

"It may very well be that there is little at the present time to prevent The Washington Post or another medium from uncovering any new CIA strategy against counterterrorism and publishing it on Page 1," he said.

He cited a May 12 front page story that reported that members of a CIA -trained counterterrorist squad were responsible for a March 8 car bombing in a Beirut suburb in which 80 Shiite Moslems were killed.

"While the Post didn't say the CIA had ordered the bombing, it did say that the CIA had 'an indirect connection' with it," Beichman said.

"Regardless how the story was obtained," the author said, "the point is that the CIA simply is too leaky to be entrusted with the kind of mission President Reagan has in mind, one which demands 100 percent secrecy."

Beichman suggested that CIA Director William Casey set up a super-secret cell within the agency composed of handpicked staff responsible only to Casey and Reagan to work on counterterrorism activities.